

Terminal Tractor/Yard Spotter

Used Yard Spotter San Francisco - Tow tractors, also called tow tugs or towing tractors are popular for moving loads horizontally in airports, arenas, warehouses, manufacturing plants and other large buildings. They are capable of towing several trailers in a train formation. Certain tow tractors can transport helicopters and giant airplanes for the purpose of positioning inside and outside airport hangars and terminals. All tow tractors use the concept of tractive effort to move loads. The complete amount of traction a vehicle utilizes on the ground. Heavier loads require more tractive effort compared to lighter loads. The tow tractor lifts a portion of the load during towing while ensuring the wheels on the load still remain on the ground. The tractive effort is increased by the unit's hydraulic mast. This has been engineered to produce downforce on the drive wheel directly under the mast. Traction allows the machine to deliver very large and heavy loads.

Types of Tow Tractors Two types of towing tractors include heavy-duty tow tractors and load carriers. Load Carriers Industries such as e-commerce, manufacturing, and airport baggage and parcel systems must regularly move many individual and varying sized items to or from a single location. Tow tugs and load carriers easily transport single items that have been deposited on wheeled platforms and move them with ease. These load carrier tow tractors fall under the material handling equipment industry which includes other machines such as pallet jacks, forklifts and cranes. Load carrier tow tugs do not transport items from high places such as shelves or platforms. They only move cargo at ground level. In order to be ready for transport, items must be secured on a wheeled platform or already on wheels to use the tow tractor. Bogies, skates and trollies are other names for wheeled platforms. The tow tractor attaches to the trolley and operates similarly to how train cars are attached to a locomotive. Generally, the steel coupling on the tow tug's male-end joins to the front trolley's female-end. Trollies move in a train-like system thanks to the male-end steel coupling on the back which can connect to numerous units and allow a single tug to transport them. These machines can transport a variety of items in varying conditions. Different trolley types are on the market to facilitate better transportation customization. Many trollies can be connected since they are compatible with one another. Since multiple trolley types can be utilized in a single train, there is flexibility. Load carrier tow tractors deliver a clear view for the operator which can be better than relying on forklifts. Further, load carrier tow tractors tow their trollies behind them in a forward-only direction which decreases the safety concerns created by forklifts operating in reverse. This design is excellent for locations that have a high level of safety such as manufacturing locations and airports. Towing many items at once saves time and money compared to relying on forklifts to move single things. They are safe and easy to maneuver. One benefit of these tow tugs is that an operator usually does not require a license. No license is necessary since these units do not lift loads up from the ground like cranes, and forklifts that require licensing. There are three kinds of load carrier tow tractor units to choose from; pedestrian, stand-in and rider-seated. Pedestrian Tow Tractors A pedestrian tow tractor, also referred to as an electric tug, electric tugger, electric hand tug or tow tractor, is a walk-behind machine designed for easy movement of wheeled loads. These machines are simple to use, extremely maneuverable and very compact. Stand-in Tow Tractors Stand-in tow tractors are the most popular design for industries that involve order picking and horizontal transport in manufacturing. They provide a secure platform for the driver to operate while still having a smaller footprint than that of the rider-seated tow tractors. Rider-Seated Tow Tractors The rider-seated tow tractors are similar to the stand-in tow tractors with the exception they provide a seated platform for the driver. Rider-seated models are used for moving loads longer distances. They are popular for airport luggage transport to move checked baggage from the check-in counter to the aircraft parked at the terminal. Reducing rider fatigue, the rider-seated models deliver more efficiency. Heavy Duty Tow Tractors In the aviation industry, large passenger and cargo planes usually employ the concept of pushback. Pushback is the process of pushing an aircraft back from the terminal by means not originating from the aircraft's personal power. This pushback process is

done by using specially designed heavy duty tow tractors called pushback tractors or pushback tugs. Pushback tractors are designed with a low profile design to enable them to move under the aircraft's nose in order to attach to the aircraft. Because of the added heavy weight of the aircraft, these tow tractors must be heavy enough to retain enough traction on the ground in order to move the aircraft. A typical tractor for large aircraft weighs up to 54 tons. They usually have a driver's cab that can be raised and lowered to increase visibility when reversing. The unit is called a pushback tow tractor or pushback tug but it is additionally used to move aircraft in situations where taxiing is not safe or practical including into and outside of aircraft maintenance. The pushback tow tractors come in two subtypes, the towbarless and the conventional.

Conventional Pushback Tow Tractors These units use a tow bar to attach the tug to the nose landing gear on the aircraft. The tow bar is laterally fixed at the nose landing gear; however, it is possible to make height adjustments with slight vertical movements. The tow bar that attaches to the tug can pivot vertically and laterally. Acting like a giant lever, the tow bar can rotate the nose landing gear. Every aircraft has a special tow fitting and the towbar functions as an adapter between the fitting on the landing gear and the standard-sized tow pin. Heavy towbars have their own wheels for big aircraft and can ride on these wheels when disconnected from planes. The hydraulic jacking mechanism is attached to the wheels, allowing the towbar to lift to the correct height in order to mate with the tug and the aircraft. The same means are used in reverse during the pushback process to raise the towbar wheels from the ground. The towbar is capable of being connected at the tractor's rear or front, depending on if the machine needs to be pulled or pushed. Depending on whether the aircraft needs to be pushed or pulled, the towbar can be attached to the front or rear of the tractor.

Towbarless Pushback Tow Tractors Towbarless tractors work without a towbar and scoop up the aircrafts' nose landing gear to lift it off of the ground instead. This offers better control and higher speeds while eliminating the requirement of having a worker stationed in the cockpit to put the brakes on. As there is no need to maintain numerous towbars, simplicity is the main advantage of this unit. Directly connecting the tug to the landing gear allows operators to have better responsiveness and control while moving the aircraft.